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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

JOHN B. HARMON

AND FAMILY.

WESTERN RESERVE
CLEVELAND
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

CLEVELAND:

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John B. Hannon



J. Austen

JOHN B. HARMON AND FAMILY.

Northern Ohio is justly noted for the intelligence, energy, integrity, and thrift of her people. Her pioneers came from the best New England families. They came with the grand purpose of founding a new State in which the rights of man and the consequent happiness of the people should be amply secured. They had the knowledge and the means requisite to a greater degree than almost any other portion of the West. They foresaw the hardships they would have to endure, but had the will to face them with unswerving courage. The toils, privations, and fatigues of pioneer life fall upon none more heavily than the physician who enjoys the general support, and ministers faithfully to the wants of such a settlement. The pioneer doctors of northern Ohio were admirably fitted for their work. Strong, enduring in body, sagacious and fertile of mind, resolute and daring, they went everywhere among the settlers, lights amid darkness, beacons of hope in hours of peril, and almoners of help in time of need. Of no one of them is this more rigidly true, than of the subject of this sketch. Six feet tall, with a round, full chest, a bundle of muscle and nerve of the finest quality, a high, square forehead jutting over deep, bluish-gray eyes, whose smile could hold the love of woman at their pleasure, or whose frown could cow a fiend, he commanded the life-long respect and friendship of the early pioneers of the Western Reserve. This imposed upon him an amount of work and responsibility which very few men could ever have met so well.

His early life fitted him for the part he was to play in after life. In helping his father carry on a large farming business in Vermont, he early began a life of exposure, often going through the winter storms on foot, with his dog and gun, from the home or Valley farm to one several

miles off up the mountains. His father, Reuben Harmon, Jr., was an extensive landholder, and had been a member of the Vermont Legislature or assembly for a number of terms, and had the privilege of coining copper coins upon his own responsibility, which was in those days no light distinction. In 1796 he purchased of Samuel H. Parsons, five hundred acres of land embracing the "salt springs," in Weathersfield township, and went there in the summer or fall of 1797, and began the manufacture of salt, returning home in the spring.

It is not known to the writer whether he left any one to continue the salt manufacture during the summer or not, but each fall and winter he returned and continued the business, and erected a cabin to become the future home of his family. In the early spring of 1800 he returned to Vermont and prepared for the final removal to the new field, which seemed to promise so much to one of his vigor and activity. An old settler of Warren, John Ewalt, said of him, "He was the smartest man I ever knew, and Doctor John B. is exactly like him. Looks like him, walks like him, talks like him, is exactly like him in all respects." He illustrated his idea of smartness by adding that "he was a general business man to draw deeds, contracts, and settle disputes. He could converse with a room full of people, fifteen or twenty, all at once, hear them tell their story, and write at the same time, and when done no word had to be erased or another to be put in. He could do as many things at a time as he needed to, and do each exactly right." While the feat is not so very difficult to one accustomed to such work, it doubtless indicates an unusual expertness and accuracy.

Having all things ready, the family started in June for the far West. Besides his wife, four

daughters and four sons, the youngest, Reuben third, being a babe three months old, he brought a family with him by the name of Barnes, who afterwards settled in Fowler. While wending their slow way thither, fresh disturbances with the Indians occurred, and they halted some time at Beaver, so that they did not arrive at the salt springs till August.

Young Harmon had begun the study of medicine in 1796, with Dr. ~~Joshua~~ Blackmer, and was prepared to practice so far as the wants of the family and the few scattered settlers should require. In the spring of 1806 Reuben Harmon, Jr., returned to Vermont to finish settling his business there. He took with him his son to pursue study further with Dr. Blackmer, who had married his elder sister Ruth, and was a skillful physician in Dorset, Vermont. Upon his return west Reuben Harmon found the agent whom he had left in charge of the salt works had disappeared with \$2,000, part of which he had collected from sales of salt, and part had been sent on before his return. Thus stripped of his means he was called to all the harder work for the support of his family. In the midst of it he was taken with fever, and died October 29, 1806, in the fifty-seventh year of his age. His loss was a sad blow to his family, and caused much inconvenience to the settlement. For nearly ten years he had made them their salt, and been a leading man among them. He had been for many years a member of the Congregational church of Rupert, Vermont, and in 1803 united by letter with the First Presbyterian church of Warren, and was noted for his decided piety, kindness to all, and rigid integrity. From a condition of independence and prospective affluence, the family were left in comparative poverty. His widow proved equal to the occasion. Ruth Rising was a daughter of Aaron and Anna Rising, of Suffield, Connecticut; was married to Mr. Harmon in September, 1774. She was a resolute, capable woman, above average height, of a broad, muscular build, sociable, cheerful, and of indomitable patience and perseverance.

During the war of the Revolution Reuben Harmon, Jr., was in the revolutionary army, and his wife either resided with his father at Sunderland, Massachusetts, or was there on a visit when it was burned by the British and Indians. Mrs. Harmon caught an unbroken colt in the

field and mounted it, bare-back, with a babe three weeks old in her arms, and fled while the smoke of her husband's early home rolled up behind her. One of such pluck was well fitted to be the first white woman in Weathersfield township. Fearless amid semi-hostile Indians, and strong in every hour of trial. The babe she had carried in her arms during the long journey west was scalded to death in 1802. May 10th of that year their youngest child, Eliza, who afterwards married Reuben Allen, and died in Illinois March 2, 1856, was born. She was a lively girl, full of song and mirth, a favorite in social gatherings, and an unfailing fountain of cheer wherever she went.

One day Mrs. Harmon was left alone in the cabin and three intoxicated Indians intruded with threatening demands for more whiskey, which she sturdily refused, and had a hard day's work to keep them from violence. At dark young Harmon returned from a day's hunting. Awhile after supper the Indians became again more violent, especially one of them, "Big Bill" as he was called, who envied the young white's skill with the rifle, was determined on whiskey or a fight. Young Harmon instantly threw him, and bumped his head soundly on the hearth, and bade him lie there until morning. When he left he brought his gun to his shoulder, and pointing to Harmon gave a whoop of vengeance. After that Big Bill and the young doctor when out hunting kept one eye for deer and one eye for the "the first shot." A sudden attack of lung fever soon after ended the strife. Passing the camp toward night, Dr. Harmon heard loud lamentations. Going in he found his enemy in the last agonies of pain, and was glad that he was relieved from shooting him or being shot himself.

Such incidents disclose some of the special perils of the new settlers.

Mrs. Harmon met all her trials with rare fortitude and sagacity. She spent the last few years of her life in Warren, at the homes of Dr. Harmon and her son, Heman R. Harmon, at whose house—a brick on the corner of Main street and Franklin alley, which he had erected with the aid of his father-in-law, George Parsons, about 1829 or 1830—she died, April 10, 1836, in her seventy-eighth year, of congestion of the lungs. She kept bright, cheerful, and active, with a large share of the enjoyments of a ripe

old age. She was a member of the Methodist church in Warren for many years, and died in the full hopes of such a faith. Thus much of the parents of Dr. Harmon. His grandfather, Reuben Harmon, was the sixty-fourth descendant of John Harman (so spelled in the records), who immigrated from England prior to 1644, when he settled in Springfield, Massachusetts, and died January 7, 1660. Reuben was his great-grandson, born at Sunderland, Massachusetts, or perhaps at Springfield, February 18, 1714, and married Eunice Parsons, of Suffield, Connecticut, August 25, 1739. He died at Rutland, Vermont, September 6, 1794. His widow died there November 18, 1803, aged eighty-six years. He sold his real estate in Suffield in 1759. In 1776 he became a large land owner in Rupert. In 1779 he bought one hundred and seventy acres in Rutland, and soon after moved there, and was selectman and justice of the peace in 1780. June 30, 1780, he conveyed to his son Oliver, in Rutland, ninety acres of land, and to his son Reuben, Jr., of Rupert, ninety acres. Some forty-five deeds passed to and from Reuben and Reuben, Jr., in the course of a few years. Dr. John B. appears to have had a leaning to land also, for in 1803 he bought of his father two hundred and fifty acres of the Salt Spring tract for \$2,500 in currency, which was resold in 1806. He became the owner afterwards of some two hundred and eighty acres in Warren township, and carried on farming quite extensively. He devoted special care to raising thoroughbred horses, but kept also choice cattle and Merino sheep, and invested in mules also to a large extent. He made himself the first horse rake used in this section, from a fence rail, eleven feet long, in which a few long teeth were put, and two stakes for handles. Hitching a large stallion called "Buck Oscar" (a racer who had never had harness on before) to this, he raked up in the afternoon nine acres of heavy grass. The weight of the rake and rapid gait of the horse made this a very hard feat. The stoutest of his hired men could not repeat it. When this rake was broken a few years later Hugh Riddle, who was in Warren temporarily, made him a light one, but it was not until several years later he could persuade his brother farmers to give up the hand-rake.

At an early day he established his brother, He-

man R. Harmon, in trade under the firm name of Harmon Brothers. The store was on the west side of Main street, south of one formerly occupied by Ephraim Quinby. In connection with Walter King they built the three story brick in 1827-28, known as the King and Harmon block, which was, in April, 1882, torn down. Harmon Brothers occupied the north half, keeping drugs in the south end and dry-goods in the north end. It had a handsome cherry circular counter, and was regarded as a grand affair in its day. King occupied the south end of his half with a jewelry store. Henry Stiles had the north part of King's half (a separate room) for a saddlery store. There the late Edward E. Hoyt, James Hoyt, and O. H. Patch, learned the saddler's trade.

Harmon Brothers lost largely by outside business, dealing in cattle, clocks, etc., and by endorsing for others. In 1832 they failed. The debts were eventually paid, by Dr. Harmon mostly, but the loss stript him of his farms, and imposed on him the necessity of prolonged toil in his profession. He never did business in the store himself, but his surplus earnings were absorbed by it. In fact, his whole life was helpful to others far more than to himself.

Upon the death of his father, he naturally assumed the guidance of the family. While at Dorset he wrote his brothers Hiram and Heman "to be careful of their leisure hours, to shun all bad habits, study evenings, so as to fit themselves for future usefulness and honorable positions in life, and to cherish always a reverent regard for the great Author of the Universe." Afterwards he sent Heman to school at Cannonsburg, Pennsylvania, with the view of his studying medicine, but exposure led to necrosis of the femur, a large part of which the doctor removed. He was left slightly lame, and gave up the study of medicine to become a merchant, farmer, and general business man, in which he was remarkably active, industrious, and useful, but a fatality adverse to financial success hovered over him.

Of the children of Reuben Harmon, the following additional particulars may be of some interest:

Anna Harmon was born February 20, 1782, in Rupert; died March, 1841, in Bristol. She was for many years employed as a school teacher in different townships of the county, and is still remembered by some of the older descendants

of the pioneers as the woman who could teach them arithmetic.

Clary Harmon was born April 12, 1785; married William Leavitt, son of John Leavitt, Esq., of Warren, from whom she was divorced because of intemperance. Afterwards she married Dr. John Brown, and moved to Lancaster, New York, where she died January 22, 1844. She was a very pleasant, agreeable, exemplary woman.

Betsey Harmon was born November 12, 1788, and died November 7, 1853; married Samuel Gilson, by whom she had a son, Reuben H. Gilson, and two daughters—Mary, who married Henry McGlathery, of Bristol, and Julia, who married Hugh Lackey, of Youngstown, who live now in Hartsgrove, Ashtabula county. After the death of Mr. Gilson, she married Albert Opdycke, and lived in Hubbard till 1836, when they moved to Pulaski, Williams county, Ohio, where they prospered greatly—one of the happiest families to be met with anywhere. Dr. Harmon prized them both very highly, and made them two visits with his wife and other relatives, which were full of pleasure to all. Dr. Harmon was an overflowing fountain of life and fun on such occasions. His last visit was in 1854. By a break in the canal they were detained a day at Toledo. At the hotel a professional checker player had cleaned out the company at a dollar a game. Dr. Harmon wore a long dressing gown and broad brimmed hat, and gravely invited the gamester to play for amusement, which was contemptuously refused. The gamester kept inquiring, "Well, old man, have you got your courage up to risking a dollar yet?" "I have never played for money, and am too old now to break my rule," was the answer. The company were anxious to take their chance on the "Old Man," but the temptation was resisted till late in the afternoon the gamester grew too impudent to be tolerated. He was relieved of five successive dollars. The broad-brim was tipped up a little, and a quizzing eye, asked if he wished to spare more. As he rose up, the hooting was more than he could stand; he paid his bill, and struck for another hotel. Dr. Harmon said he thought the scamp was worse punished than he was himself, but concluded the end justified the means. Mr. and Mrs. Opdycke had six sons and one daughter, who is the wife of O. H. Patch, of Warren.

Lucretia Harmon was born February 11, 1791, and married William Draper, of Weathersfield, who lived but a short time. She afterwards married William Frazier, of Hubbard, moved to Trenton, Ohio, and afterwards to Dearborn, Indiana, where he died in May, 1862. Mrs. Frazier died at Dillsboro, Indiana, January, 1871, and was the last of the family of eleven children—four sons and seven daughters, of whom nine were well known by the pioneers of Trumbull county.

Hiram R. Harmon was the ninth child and second son, born at Rupert, Vermont, December 18, 1793, died at Ives Grove, Wisconsin, October 15, 1852; was a blacksmith, lived in Liberty and Brookfield a few years, then moved to Bristol, and bought the Potter farm, where he kept a hotel for many years, working at his trade some, and farming extensively. He sold his farm, and moved on one a mile west of the village, but a few years later moved West, and died of apoplexy in the harvest field about three years after, an active, industrious, honest, and capable man, and a zealous advocate of temperance and anti-slavery.

Heman R. Harmon was born February 12, 1798, and died December 1, 1859. He began business early in Warren as a merchant, dealt extensively in cattle, taking large droves East, and carried on a large farm near the springs. He was at different times a member of the firm of Harmon Brothers, of Harmon & Stiles, and of E. E. Hoyt & Co., and of Harmon & Johnson. He served two terms as sheriff of the county, was an ardent politician, and an indefatigable worker in all that he undertook,—aided in the manufacture of the Heath mowing machine, and started the first one in the county. Liberal-minded, truthful and kind to all, he did work enough to have amassed a fortune. His losses grew out of adverse circumstances more than from special faults of his own.

Dr. John B. Harmon was born in Rupert, Bennington county, Vermont, October 19, 1780; was named after John Brown, a friend of his father in the Vermont Assembly. His early education was limited, but he was sufficiently acquainted with Latin to give him a good understanding of the Latin terms in use in the medical books of his day. He was correct in spelling and grammar, quick and accurate in arithmetic,

well versed in English and American history, and was fond of speculative inquiries, such as Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding, Hume's Moral, Political, and Religious Essays, etc. He was partial to poetry also, Pope, Burns, and Shakespeare he often quoted, as well as Cowper and Watts. The Bible was at his tongue's end as much as with a Methodist or Disciple minister. In politics he was a Jeffersonian, afterwards a J. Q. Adams man and Whig. In medicine he was cautious and conservative, but progressive, so as always to adopt new views and remedies so far as reason and experience showed them to be of value. In 1814-16 he abandoned venesection in camp fever. He early adopted stimulants and cold water in fevers, and chlorate potassa, tincture of iron, and digitalis in scarlet fever. Ether and chloroform he hailed at once as boons to the suffering. At seventy years of age he was more progressive than many doctors of thirty-five. He was bold and skillful in surgical operations, having a hand which remained steady to the last. But he always studied carefully every operation of danger before he began it. His knowledge of anatomy was derived largely from books and plates, but it was accurate and minute. His observation was acute to a proverb, and his sound judgment was admitted as master of all. The late Tracy Bronson, M. D., said of him: "He had the best judgment of us all. I thought I had as much science, but when we got in a pinch and didn't know what to do, he would see at a glance, and help us out."

From 1800 to 1806 he aided his father in the salt works, which were carried on extensively, and furnished salt to the settlers at distant points, as well as those nearer. He enjoyed the common sport of the day, deer and bear hunting, and was one of the most expert at an off-hand long shot. One winter he had some twenty deer strung up on a hill a mile west of the springs. The law of hunters made such property more safe than bolts and locks now make our hams and bacon. The fat of the bear was used in cooking. Dr. Harmon used to say, "with a short cake in his bosom, made from bears' oil, he could travel further on a hunt or a ride, than on any other food." One time he treed a cub, placed his gun at the foot of the tree, and his dog to guard it, and climbing secured the cub.

Its cries quickly brought the she bear from the thicket, but the sagacious dog, keeping out of her reach, quickly seized her as she essayed the tree, so at last she retreated, and Harmon descended with his cub, and regained his gun, when the bear renewed the attack. Backing off with the cub on his shoulders, and the dog at the heels of the enraged animal, while he held his gun cocked, and ready for the shot, he saw her finally give up the pursuit, and he bore his cub home in triumph.

In 1804 Dr. Enoch Leavitt settled in Leavittsburg, and Dr. Harmon resorted to him at intervals for study. In 1808 he returned from Vermont and located in Warren. His practice rapidly increased, and although the fees were low, yet they enabled him to meet his large expenses easily. Part of this time he boarded at the tavern kept on Market street, by Colonel William W. Cotgreave, by whom he was commissioned surgeon of the Second regiment, Fifth brigade, Fourth division of the militia of the State of Ohio, on the 10th day of August, 1813. This commission was repeated by Stephen Oviatt, colonel, February 5, 1817, and by Governor Worthington, July 17, 1818, only his brigade was the first, and the rank of captain was assigned to him. He was present at the attack on Fort Mackinaw in 1813. When our forces first reached the fort, Dr. Harmon urged an immediate attack, but the general delayed some three days, during which it was reinforced, and the attack was repulsed with great loss. During the fight a captain was shot with a poisoned arrow in the body. His sufferings were great, and he cried out, "Oh doctor, for God's sake give me a cup of water." A spring near by had been alternately in possession of the contending parties. The doctor got a squad of twenty men, and gained possession long enough to secure some muddy water. The captain drank a cupful and exclaimed, "Now, if I had a shot at that d—d Indian I'd die content."

On returning to Cleveland the doctor was left on the boat with his sick and wounded while the officers proceeded to the tavern. He charged them first of all to send supplies to the boat, waiting until he became impatient, he went to the hotel and found the company at table. To an invitation to a seat, he sternly replied, "He did not eat till the sick were cared for." Their

needs were attended to while the feasting was delayed.

Near the close of the war he resumed practice in Warren, and from this time on his rides extended greatly, reaching to Cleveland, Painesville, Ashtabula on the lake, and a long distance in all directions, as, indeed, they had previously, but now more frequently. These rides were made on horseback, and it is no wonder that he sought out the elastic, easy-gaited racer. The fast walk, easy trot, courage, and endurance made him indispensable. One night his favorite "Buck Rabbit" broke through the ice with him in crossing Musquito creek, near Captain Joseph Marvin's. The game horse struggled through ice and up the steep miry bank. The doctor rode, with his clothes froze to him, some four miles on, sat beside a woman in labor and rode home without food the next morning.

In the winter of 1816 he laid out in the woods, three miles west of Warren, in a fierce storm, his horse chained to a sapling, and himself beside a log, while the wolves kept up their howling and snapping at his horse, who kept them at bay with his heels. He lost his watch there, but noted the spot so carefully that it was found the next spring. In riding home one night the doctor fell asleep, and his horse walked a fourteen-inch stringer laid across the Mahoning river at the "Wilnot center of the world," and as he stepped off the doctor awakened, to find how safely his favorite had carried him over. But sometimes the roads were too bad for the best of horses. Then the doctor went afoot with his saddle-bags on his arm, across the country as best he could. His light, agile step enabled him to do a vast deal of such pilgrimages. In one of these tramps he walked sixty-five miles, starting at break of day, seeing many patients, and reaching home at 10 o'clock at night.

In the winter of 1816 he attended a family of six children and the parents in Aurora, all down with the epidemic of typhoid pneumonia. He reached them each night, laid upon the hearth floor, and returned next day. Upon their recovery, he was himself taken sick. He went to the house of his mother at "Salt Springs," hired a trusty nurse, and gave her directions how to manage him in the bad turns of the disease, with the promise of his horse and saddle should he not recover. One night he was thought to be dying.

Dr. John W. Seeley was sent for, but he said "Dr. John B. will be all right in the morning," and did not visit him. The nurse tided him through, but for six months after he was so emaciated as to ride with a pillow on his saddle, and carried a cold foot, which he had to warm even in warm weather, ever after.

In 1816 he bought the frame (which had been erected the year previous) on lot forty in Warren, and in 1817 finished the story and a half dwelling, where he afterwards resided. His sisters, Mrs. Clara Leavitt and Mrs. Dunscomb, kept house for him several years. Mrs. Dunscomb was made blind by small-pox, but was a neat housekeeper; kept everything easy in her hands, could make a good shirt even, and made a good home for the doctor as well as herself, her husband having died early after his removal from Rupert to the springs in 1802. Afterwards the wife of Captain Thompson (who taught in the academy) kept house for him. In 1822, February 6th, he married Sarah Dana at Pembroke, New York. Although never engaged, an early friend had forsaken him for another, and this no doubt had led him to postpone so important an event, but at the suggestion of Mrs. Leavitt, mother of the late George Parsons, and an aunt of Miss Dana, he had obtained by letter "the promise." He drove on in a double team sleigh, was introduced to the bride to be, and the next day started for home. He could not have found one better suited to aid him in his hard toil, had he looked over New England.

Although of poor health, she kept his house in order—kept track of his patients, provided for all his home wants with economy, and left him free of all such cares as often vex men in their homes.

In the summer of 1822 Dr. Leavitt wished to operate on a Mrs. Norton for the removal of a tumor in the abdomen. Young Dr. Harmon advised against it, but Dr. Leavitt had removed a large fatty tumor from a Mrs. Gaylord some two years before, and was determined that this was like it. It proved to be a cancerous mass on the under side of the liver. He handed the knife to Dr. Harmon, who dissected out several masses from the size of a goose's egg to a small pullet's egg. Dr. Leavitt staid with her six days and nights, and she recovered so as to ride to Warren, a distance of some three miles, but died about four months after. During his attendance

on her Dr. Harmon was induced by Mrs. Leavitt to adopt one of her daughters, Mitty, then a girl of eight years. She proved to be a woman of rare good sense, an elder sister to his children, and a life long faithful daughter. She was born June 23, 1814, at Hamburg, New York; married Jacob Gimperling April 8, 1833, lived several years in Hudson, Ohio, then moved to Ravenna, where he died December 25, 1848. She returned to Dr. Harmon's, and married Rev. John McLean, then in Bristol, November 4, 1863. She died in Canfield in 1878 or 1879; was a devoted Methodist from sixteen years of age, and was highly respected by many warm friends.

In 1830 Dr. Harmon was prostrated by a severe run of fever, which nearly proved fatal. In 1833 he was pulled by a colt he was leading, from his saddle, and his horse ran, dragging him by the heels in his stirrup till the breaking of the girth released him. His back was so hurt that he could not sit down or get up for a long time without help. Years after in attempting to do so he would suddenly fall helpless. But he kept at his work. In February, 1838, his horse ran away and broke his ribs and one leg, and he lay in the snow for some time till found by John McConnell, whose son William he was visiting. He was helped in his sleigh, and went on and prescribed for his patient, and was brought home before his own injuries were cared for. About 1840 a tumor formed on his left side, beneath the deep pectoral muscle. It was opened by Dr. Delamater, and again by Dr. Bronson, and a seton put in. The inflammation was severe, and was nearly fatal. In the summer of 1845 he was again severely sick, and again in 1854 he had a congestive chill, in which for four hours he seemed to be past recovery. All of these attacks were results of excessive work and special injuries, which his iron constitution enabled him to survive.

In 1852 he returned East with his wife and visited his early home and hers also. They spent six weeks of May and June in such pleasant way. He found the remains of his father's old copper mill, still at Rupert, and several boys like himself grown to be seventy and eighty years of age.

In 1854 he foreswore practice, saying that "an old man without eyes, ears, teeth, or

fingers had no business to be dabbling in medicine." This was not true of him, but it indicated his belief, that a man should quit before he becomes incompetent. His help, however, continued to be sought in counsel often, and was ever of aid to his son, who was taking his place in active work. His last case of obstetrics was in July, 1857. His practice in this branch extended over fifty five years. He early supplied himself with a complete set of obstetrical instruments, and was expert in their use. In general surgery he was recognized as a master till the time of Ackley. In his fine sense of touch and cautious judgment he occasionally proved himself superior even to him, and the still more celebrated Mott, of New York city.

In 1838 he was sued for malpractice, in having (as was said) unnecessarily amputated a leg. The prosecution was conducted by the Hon. J. R. Giddings, with the help of Wade, Sutliff, and Ranney. The defence was made by David Tod and R. P. Spalding. The leg had been crushed by a timber rolling down from the top of a cabin which was being raised. Doctors John W. and Sylvanus Seeley were called in, on the second day as counsel, and the operation was done. They were all sued. The unquestioned ability of the surgeons, and the fame of the counsel, gave the case great notoriety. The issue was squarely made: Had an ignorant public the right to pass judgment on the action of three eminent surgeons, who had fully considered the case at the time? Giddings claimed the right, and had succeeded a few years before in obtaining a verdict against a doctor in Ashtabula county, for not properly caring, as was charged, for an injured ankle. He was a monomaniac on the subject, as it were, and left nothing undone that a zealous and able man could do, to win his case. Tod and Spalding were equally zealous and able for the defence, and were completely successful. The expense was large. It cost Dr. Harmon more than he had ever made from surgery; but it showed to the public the essential impudence of such prosecutions, and has resulted in a better understanding of medical responsibility. There is no more sense in such a suit than there would be if a doctor should assume to prosecute three eminent lawyers for losing a case they had done their best to win, and such is the feeling now with the legal profession.

Dr. Harmon was usually a silent, thoughtful man, but when occasion called expressed himself fluently and clearly. He was outspoken in all his convictions, and gave his reasons with such force and originality as to command a respectful hearing. While opposing invariably what he thought errors in religion, he yet made firm friends among the most devout of women, and the ablest of preachers. From early days until his decease Presbyterians and Methodists, Baptists and Disciples alike patronized and honored him. Said the women, "We can't see why he thought as he did, but he was surely a good man, and he has gone to heaven." He was ever at the call of the sick, whether pay was to be had or not. He sometimes swam his horse across the Mahoning, swollen with floating ice, to meet a professional engagement. A large part of his life regular sleep was unknown to him. Within the memory of his children he has gone two weeks without undressing at home, because of daily calls. He learned to sleep on his horse, or in his sulky, and when he lay down instantly fell asleep; would awake at a call, put up medicine in his bed, give directions, and be asleep before the waiter was out of the room. He had his amusements. The fleet horse must be put to his mettle, and he delighted in the race, not for gaming but for love of the beauty and fleetness of the horse. About 1830 the "Warren Jockey Club" was formed, and a mile track was made on the John Leavitt (now James Hoyt) farm in Leavittsburg. In the spring and fall one, two, three, and four mile races were held. Sporting men came with the best racers of neighboring States. Dr. Harmon kept some of the fleetest himself. The Pennsylvania & Ohio canal went through the track and ended the sport in 1839. In boyhood he began the play of checkers, at which he soon became the best of his day. In the leisure hours of later life he often met his friends, the Seeleys, Bronson, and King, in the auditor's office, where Jacob H. Baldwin presided so long, and had a tilt. He had less fondness for back-gammon, but indulged in that occasionally with Judge Pease, Parsons, and Freeman, and others. He had become known as a checker player from Maine to New Orleans. Champion players from all parts came to play with him, only to find their superior. He excelled in whatever he undertook. His natural

endowments were of the very highest order. One who had seen the leading public men of his age, both in this country and abroad, said: "He always impressed me as being the peer of any man I ever met." The last few years of his life were spent in quiet ease. Young in face, hair but slightly gray, and scarcely thinned, erect and straight as an arrow, he took his daily walks with a light step, read the news of the day and the last Medical Journal, and mingled with his friends, cheerful and thoughtful himself, and greatly revered by all. He was taken with an acute pleuro-pneumonia in January, and died February 7, 1858.

The Cleveland Leader said of him :

Dr. Harmon was skillful and scientific, and met the largest success to which one in his profession can attain. As a man, he was true in all his relations, a faithful husband, kind father, obliging neighbor, steadfast, generous friend, patriotic citizen, a helper in every good work, a great, good, and true man — "we ne'er shall look upon his like again."

His wife, Sarah (Dana) Harmon, was born in Enfield, Connecticut, September 24, 1796; was the seventh daughter of Daniel and Dorothy (Kibbee) Dana. Her father was born in Ashford, Connecticut, September 16, 1760, and died in Warren, November 8, 1839. He graduated at Yale college, and was a studious man of letters; of the fifth generation from Richard Dana, who immigrated from France, and died at Cambridge, Massachusetts, April 2, 1690. Miss Dana was delicate in health, barely escaping death in early womanhood by consumption; but had perseverance and energy sufficient to enable her to meet the demands of her day with ample success. She was a friend to all; her "charity covered a multitude of sins" in the erring, and her household gits were ever at the disposal of the young, who lacked in the requisites of good housekeeping. She toiled hard to bring up the family, and was anxious to see them educated as well as possible. In the evenings her kitchen table was set for her boys to study, and with the intuitive tact of woman, she could help them to learn what she did not know herself. She was a natural cook, and delighted in surprising her family with new dishes. The love of flowers was strong within her, and she kept as many in her door-yard as economy would permit. She early became a member of the Presbyterian church, and remained a quiet, unobtrusive, but firm and consistent member. After the death of

her husband, she gave up the cares of the house, and led an easy, cheerful life till its close, November 6, 1868.

They had six children. John B. Harmon, Jr., born October 29, 1822; graduated at Yale in 1842, a lawyer of San Francisco; grand master of Odd Fellows in 1878-79, to whom they gave a grand reception in Warren October 4, 1878, in which the citizens universally joined, making it by far the grandest celebration ever held in Warren, if not in the State. Six hundred and seventy-two guests sat at the table at one time in the Methodist church, details of which may be found on another page, in the History of Odd Fellowship.

Doctor Julian Harmon, born August 1, 1824; graduated at Western Reserve college August, 1846, at Cleveland Medical college February 28, 1849; practiced with his father till March 1, 1854; continued alone till June, 1860, when Dr. J. T. Smith formed a partnership with him. Smith went out, as assistant surgeon with the Second Ohio volunteer cavalry in 1861. Dr. Harmon continued his rides during the war, during which his practice became very extensive. In the winter of 1862-63 he rode horseback through snow and mud for ninety consecutive days, a trip of from thirty-two to fifty-two miles, going on foot evenings and mornings around the town. One night he walked between 8 and 11 o'clock six miles, after a ride of fifty-one miles. Small and delicate, he seemed unfitted for such work, and was induced to enter the drug business in September, 1865. He left it April 1, 1868, having lost some \$16,000. His wife had died six weeks previous, and he was, in consequence, deprived of the help he relied on, which made his pecuniary loss greater. He resumed practice in his old office, with Dr. Metcalf, till April, 1875, since when he has been alone. He has acted as examining surgeon for Trumbull county, for pensions, for some twenty years; is an active member of Trumbull county, Northeastern Ohio, and the State Medical societies, and has been a trustee of the Newburg insane asylum and of the Western Reserve college.

He married J. Rebecca Swift, daughter of George and Olive (Kinsman) Swift, July 30, 1857, by whom he has two daughters and one son. He was married again, June 6, 1871, to

Mary E. Bostwick, daughter of L. L. and Margaret (Wetmore) Bostwick, of Canfield, by whom he has one son living, an elder one having died October 26, 1881. He himself was severely sick from thirteen to nineteen years of age, and in 1851, and again in 1871 was nearly cut off by erysipelas of head and neck. In 1860 he was prostrated nine weeks by jaundice, and has had no light burden of infirmity to contend with a large part of his life.

The loss of Captain Harmon's son Ellis, (whom he had adopted) at thirteen years of age, and his own son, Charlie, at nine years, both by malignant diphtheria, were severe disappointments of his hopes in the future. The sudden loss of his wife, February 13, 1868, made a black chasm across his pathway. Brilliant and sociable, unwearying and devoted as a wife and mother, generous and helpful, she was taken away just when she would have been of the highest value to him and their children. His sister was a close friend and intellectual companion and adviser, whose recent loss has added heavily to his burdens. Amid all, he has remained true to his manhood. Integrity unsullied, and elastic in spirits, he bids fair to keep his ship afloat awhile longer, and bring her to port in good trim at last. As a physician he has been prompt in attendance, quick to recognize and skillful in combating the dangerous forms of disease. He was eminently successful in 1854 during an epidemic of vesicular bronchitis among children. During the great prevalence of scarlet fever and diphtheria in 1861-62-63 and 1864 he lost but very few out of a large number of cases. In the gravest accidents of obstetric practice he has been prompt, skillful and successful. For many years he acted as surgeon for the Cleveland & Mahoning, and Atlantic & Great Western railroads, and has managed some desperately bad cases with most gratifying success. Unassuming in manners, devoid of all trickery, frank in speech, clear in convictions, enthusiastic in the love of his profession, he may fairly be called a chip from the granite block.

Captain Charles R. Harmon was born November 4, 1826. Active and restless as a child, he abhorred the confinement of school, but when the fit was on him, would learn in a few weeks all that his mates had spent a full term on. At thirteen he entered the store of E. E. Hoyt & Co. as clerk, and remained there till 1846, when

he became a clerk with T. P. Ellis & Co., of New York city, dealers in hardware. March 5, 1848, he married Mary, daughter of James and Sarah (Heywood) Hezlep, of Girard, Ohio, and established himself in the hardware business at Warren, in company with Edward E. Hoyt, under the firm name of Harmon & Co. Mr. Hoyt withdrew their part of the business from the firm of E. E. Hoyt & Co., and Charlie pushed the business to a large extent. Warren Packard and James G. Brooks were his clerks. In a few years the firm was dissolved, and he continued the business alone. Packard was started in a separate store with \$1,200 worth of goods bought by Harmon, who was a silent partner with Mr. Packard for three years.

In 1854 Mr. Harmon formed a partnership with H. A. Opdycke, but continued in business only a few months. An uncurbed passion for sport brought his business to a close. Soon after, he moved to Iowa, remained there one or two years, and returned to Warren.

With the aid of relatives he built a house on Washington avenue, published a spicy sheet in the interest of the Mecca oil business for about a year, enlisted in company F of the Twenty-fourth Ohio volunteer infantry as a private, was in the Western Virginia campaign in Colonel Ammon's brigade, served as a valuable scout, and enjoyed the hearty respect of Colonel Ammon. He was home on a recruiting furlough with rank of lieutenant. In February and March, 1862, he rejoined his regiment with his recruits, immediately after the battle of Shiloh, was the first soldier over the defences at Corinth, and was in the march from Alabama to Louisville when the race was run on quarter rations.

In a letter to the *Spirit of the Times* he gave a vivid caricature of the performance under the signature of "Renben."

At the battle of Perryville he wrote home:

Here we are, fifty-five thousand men in arms, anxious to fight. The country is rolling and our cannon could sweep it, but we will have no order to move. Buell will let McCook be slaughtered, he will never fight unless he is forced to; then he would go in grandly to save his reputation. Our officers say it is only a skirmish, but every private as well as officer know it is death to McCook and his men.

At the battle of Stone River the lieutenant-colonel was shot at the outset. In the afternoon Lieutenant Harmon and men were ordered down flat, to cool their guns and let our cannon play

over them; raising his head a little upon his hands, he encouraged his men, humming, "Who would not be a brave soldier boy?" A sharpshooter up a neighboring tree sent a bullet through his brain. While being carried back, Major Terry (then in command) said, "Halt, let me see him." As he leaned forward the same gun brought him to the ground, as he was saying "Oh, God, but it's hard." All the officers were picked off save one captain, who had more discretion than valor. The sharpshooter was seen at last, and a volley riddled him.

The commission of captain was mailed Lieutenant Harmon by Governor Tod the day he was killed, and after long discussion between Commissioner Bartlett and Dr. J. Harmon as to the pension his widow was entitled to, the commission was returned home by the valiant captain, who had kept it till after the battle at Chickamauga. The same day came the pension as lieutenant. Dr. Harmon forwarded both to Washington, and soon after President Lincoln issued an order that in all such cases the soldier should be put on the rolls as if he had received his commission and been formally mustered in. He had been acting captain for some six months, and justice was done his widow by the effect of the order.

Captain Harmon was naturally extremely sensitive to suffering, and not till after long effort could he see blood without fainting, yet he was cool, brave, and daring in the extreme.

Although addicted to sport, he was rigidly temperate, and would not permit liquor or tobacco to the young in his employ. He was a courteous and very popular salesman, and could command a high salary. When pressed with poverty, he was offered a salary of one thousand dollars to enter a grocery and liquor store in Warren, but said "he would starve sooner than engage in such work." He was a very sociable and attractive man, correct in business, a ready writer, furnishing a play for school exhibitions, or a racy letter to the *Chronicle* from the army, with ease. His companions in arms honored and trusted him. Had fate spared him his career would have been one of continued and increasing success. When he arrived at Louisville from Alabama, the news reached him of the death of his twin son Ellis, by diphtheria. The blow was cruel indeed. He wrote home, "If ever I return, I

shall be looking for the dear boy, with a longing earth can not fill. If I fall, let my body rest where it falls." The cemetery at Murtresboro holds the remains of few men so brave, unselfish, and capable as was Captain Charles R. Harmon.

Edward D. Harmon was born May 1, 1831; clerked for his brother, Charles R., some time; went to California in March, 1853; returned and married Marie Metcalfe, of Newark, Ohio, in the summer or fall of 1868. He is a prosperous farmer and real estate dealer in Oakland, California.

Sarah D. Harmon, their only daughter, was born April 3, 1833, and died in Warren, July 6, 1880. She was highly educated, and taught in the grammar and high schools of Warren, Dunkirk, Columbus, Elkhart, and Poughkeepsie, (Select Ladies seminary,) and also in Santord's seminary, at Cleveland. Never robust, she overworked in her school duties, and wore herself out prematurely, but had done a good life's

work with great success, and bore a year and a half of intense suffering with great courage and resignation, and the firm hope of an humble Christian woman.

Their youngest child, Willie, was born June 30, 1835, and died April 10, 1836, a pet favorite with his father, never forgotten. The stern, stoical man years after would drop a tear when, coming to his home, some incident would recall his babe. The inner feelings of such men are seldom understood. A few years before his death, a poor woman said to him, "Oh doctor, you can't imagine how I felt when my child was scalded." "Ah, mother," he said, "yes I do; my youngest brother was scalded to death, over fifty years ago, and I hear his cries again every time I am called to care for such a case." This acute sensibility, coupled with resolute courage and self control, is largely enstamped upon his children, softened in some more than in others, by the quiet tenderness of his wife.



